

3
PROPOSITIONS
Concerning
CHVRCH-GOVERNMENT
AND
ORDINATION
OF
MINISTERS.

Westminster Assembly of Divines



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PROPOSITIONS

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TO

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

THE

LORDS and COMMONS

Assembled in

PARLIAMENT:

The humble advice of the Assembly
of Divines, now sitting by Ordinance
of Parliament at WESTMINSTER,
Concerning CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

The Preface.



Esus Christ upon whose shoulders the Government
is, whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor,
the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince
of Peace, of the increase of whose Government and
Peace there shall be no end, who sits upon the throne
of David, and upon his Kingdom to order it, and to
establish it with Judgment and Justice, from henceforth even for
ever, having all power given unto him in Heaven and in Earth by
the Father, who raised him from the dead and set him on his own
Right Hand, far above all Principalities and Power, and Might and
Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World,
but also in that which is to come, and put all things under his feet,
and gave him to be the head over all things, to the Church which
is his Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all; He being ascen-
ded up far above all Heavens, that he might fill all things, received
gifts for his Church, and gave offices necessary for the edification
of his Church, and perfecting of his Saints.

Isa. 9. 6, 7.

Mat. 28. 18

19. 20.

Eph. 1. 20.

21, 22, 23.

Compared

with Eph.

4. 8. 11. and

Pla. 68. 18.

Of the Church.

THere is one General Church visible held forth in the New Testament, *1 Cor. 12. 12, 13, 28.* together with the rest of the Chapter.

The Ministry, Oracles, and Ordinances of the New Testament, are given by Jesus Christ to the General Church visible, for the gathering and perfecting of it in this life until his second coming, *1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 4, 5.* compared with *vers. 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16.* of the same Chapter.

Particular visible Churches, Members of the General Church are also held forth in the new Testament, *Gal. 1. 21, 22. Rev. 1. 4. 20.* and *Rev. 2. 1.* Particular Churches in the Primitive times were made up of visible Saints, viz. Of such as being of age professed faith in Christ, and obedience unto Christ, according to the Rule of Faith and Life taught by Christ and his Apostles; And of their Children, *Acts 2. 38, 41. Acts 2. vers. last,* compared with *Acts 5. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 2.* compared with the *2 Cor. 9. 13. Acts 2. 39. 1 Cor. 7. 14. Rom. 11. 16.* and so forward, *Mark 10. 14.* compared with *Math. 19. 13, 14. Luke 18. 15, 16.*

Of the Officers of the Church.

THe Officers which Christ hath appointed for the edification of his Church, and the perfecting of the Saints, are,

Some extraordinary, as Apostles, Evangelists and Prophets, which are ceased.

Others ordinary and perpetual, as Pastors, Teachers, and other Church Governors and Deacons.

Pastors.

THe Pastor is an ordinary and perpetual Officer in the Church, *Ier. 3. 15, 16, 17.* Prophecyng of the time of the Gospel, *1 Pet. 5. 2, 3, 4. Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.*

First, It belongs to his office;

To pray for and with his flock as the mouth of the people unto God, *Acts 6. 2, 3, 4. Acts 20. 36.* Where Preaching and Prayer are

are joynd as several parts of the same Office, *James* 5. 14, 15. The Office of the Elder, that is the Pastor, is to pray for the sick, even in private, to which a blessing is especially promised, much more therefore ought he to perform this in the publick execution of his Office as a part thereof, *1 Cor.* 14. *vers.* 15, 16.

To read the Scripture publickly, for the proof of which;

1. That the Priests and Levites in the Jewish Church, were trusted with the publick reading of the Word, as is proved, *Deut.* 31. 9, 10, 11. *Neb.* 8. 1, 2, and 13.

2. That the Ministers of the Gospel have as ample a Charge and Commission to dispence the Word as wel as other Ordinances, as the Priests and Levites had under the Law proved, *Isa.* 66. 21. *Mat.* 23. 34. where our Saviour intituleth the Officers of the New Testament whom he wil send forth by the same names of the teachers of the Old.

Which Propositions prove, that therefore (the duty being of a Moral nature) it followeth by just consequence, that the publick reading of the Scriptures belongeth to the Pastors Office.

To feed the Flock by Preaching of the Word according to which he is to teach, convince, reprove, exhort and comfort, *1 Tim.* 3. 2. *2 Tim.* 3. 16, 17. *Tit.* 1. 9.

To Catechise, which is a plain laying down the principles of the Oracles of God, *Heb.* 5. 12. or of the Doctrine of Christ, and is a part of Preaching.

To dispence other divine mysteries, *1 Cor.* 4. 1, 2.

To administer the Sacraments, *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. *Mark* 16. 15. 16. *1 Cor.* 11. 23, 24, 25. compared with *1 Cor.* 10. 16.

To bless the People from God, *Numb.* 6. 23, 24, 25, 26. compared with *Rev.* 14. 5. (where the same blessings and Persons from whom they come are expressly mentioned) *Isa.* 66. 21. Where under the names of Priests and Levites to be continued under the Gospel, are meant Evangelical Pastors, who therefore are by Office to bless the People, *Deut.* 10. 8. *2 Cor.* 13. 14. *Eph.* 1. 2.

To take care of the poor, *Acts* 11. 30. *Acts* 4. 34, 35, 36, 37. *Acts* 6. 2, 3, 4. *1 Cor.* 16. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Gal.* 2. 9, 10.

And he hath also a ruling power over the flock as a Pastor, *1 Tim.* 5. 17. *Acts* 20. 17. and 28. *1 Thess.* 5. 12. *Heb.* 13. 7, 17.

Teacher

Teacher or Doctor.

THe Scripture doth hold out the name and title of Teacher, as well as of the Pastor, 1 Cor. 12. 28. Ephes. 4. 11.

Who is also a Minister of the Word as well as the Pastor, and hath power of administration of the Sacraments.

The Lord having given different gifts, and divers exercises according to these gifts in the Ministry of the Word, Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8. 1 Cor. 12. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7. Though these different gifts may meet in one, accordingly be exercised by one and the same Minister, 1 Cor. 14. 4. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Tit. 1. 9. yet where be several Ministers in the same Congregation, they may be designed to several employments, according to the different gifts in which each of them doth most excel, Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. and he that doth more excellently exposition of Scripture, in teaching sound Doctrine, and in convincing gain-sayers, than he doth in application, and is accordingly employed therein, may be called a Teacher, or Doctor (the places) alledged by the Notation of the Word doth prove the Proposition. Nevertheless, where is but one Minister in a particular Congregation; he is to perform, so far as he is able, the whole work of the Ministry, as appeareth in the 2 Tim. 4. 2. Tit. 1. 9. before alledged, 1 Tim. 6. 2.

A Teacher or Doctor is of most excellent use in Schools, and Universities, as of old in the Schools of the Prophets; and at Jerusalem, where Gamaliel and others taught as Doctors.

Other Church Governors.

AS there were in the Jewish Church, Elders of the people joynted with the Priests and Levites in the Government of the Church (as appeareth in the 2 Chro. 19. 8, 9, 10.) So Christ, who hath instituted a Government, and Governors Ecclesiastical in the Church, hath furnished some in his Church, beside the Ministers of the Word, with gifts for Government, and with commission to execute the same when called thereunto, who are to joyn with the Minister in the Government of the Church, Rom. 12. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 12. 28. which Officers, Reformed Churches commonly call Elders,

Deacons,

Deacons.

THe Scripture doth hold out Deacons as distinct Officers in the Church, *Phil. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 3. 8.* Whose office is perpetual, *1 Tim. 3. 8. to verse 15. Acts 6. 1, 2, 3, 4.* To whose office it belongs not to preach the Word or administer the Sacraments, but to take special care in distributing to the necessities of the poor, *Acts 6. 1, 2, 3, 4.* and the verses following.

Of particular Congregations

IT is lawful and expedient that there be fixed Congregations, that is, a certain company of Christians to meet in one Assembly ordinarily for publick worship. When Believers multiply to such a number that they cannot conveniently meet in one place; It is lawful and expedient that they should be divided into distinct and fixed Congregations, for the better administration of such Ordinances as belong unto them, and the discharge of mutual duties, *1 Cor. 14. vers. 26. Let all things be done unto edifying,* and *verses 33. and 40.*

The ordinary way of dividing Christians into distinct Congregations, and most expedient for edification, is by the respective bounds of their dwellings.

First, Because they who dwell together, being bound to all kind of moral duties one to another, have the better opportunity thereby to discharge them; which moral tie is perpetual, for Christ came not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it.

Deu. 15. 7,

11.

Mat 22.

39.

Mat 5. 17.

Secondly, The Communion of Saints must be so ordered as may stand with the most convenient use of the ordinances, and discharge of Moral duties without respect of Persons, *1 Cor. 14. 26. Let all things be done unto edifying.* *Heb. 10. 24, 25. Jam. 2. 1, 2.*

Thirdly, The Pastor and People must so neerly co-habitate together, as that they may mutually perform their duties each to other with most convenience.

In this company some must be set apart to bear Office.

Of the Officers of a particular Congregation.

FOR Officers in a single Congregation, there ought to be one at the least, both to labour in the Word and Doctrine, and to Rule, *Prov. 29.18. 1 Tim. 5.17. Heb. 13.7.*

It is also requisite, that there should be others to joyn in Government; *1 Cor. 12.28.*

And likewise it is requisite, that there be others to take special care for the relief of the poor, *Acts 6.2, 3.*

The number of each of which is to be proportioned according to the condition of the Congregation.

These Officers are to meet together at convenient and set times, for the wel ordering of the affairs of that Congregation, each according to his Office.

It is most expedient that in these meetings, one whose Office is to labour in the Word and Doctrine, do moderate in their proceedings, *1 Tim. 5.17.*

Of the ordinance in a particular Congregation.

THE ordinances in a single Congregation, are Prayer, Thanksgiving, and singing of Psalms, *1 Tim. 2. vers. 1. 1 Cor. 14.15, 16.* The word read (although there follow no immediate explanation of what is read) the Word expounded and applied, Catechising, the Sacraments administred, Collection made for the poor, dismissing the people with a blessing.

Of Church Government, and the several sorts of Assemblies for the same.

CHrist hath instituted a Government, and Governors Ecclesiastical in the Church, to that purpose the Apostles did immediately receive the keys from the hand of Jesus Christ, and did use & exercise them in all the Churches of the world upon all occasions.

And Christ hath since continually furnished some in his Church with gifts of Government, and with commission to execute the same when called thereunto.

It is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that the Church be

be governed by several sorts of Assemblies, which are Congregational, Classical, and Synodical.

Of the power in Common of all these Assemblies.

IT is lawfull and agreeable to the word of God, that the several Assemblies before mentioned have power to convent and call before them any person within their several bounds, whom the Ecclesiastical business which is before them doth concern, proved by *Mat. Chap. 18.*

They have power to hear and determine such causes and differences as do orderly come before them.

It is lawfull and agreeable to the Word of God, that all the said Assemblies have some power to dispence Church censures.

Of Congregational Assemblies, that is, The meeting of the ruling Officers of a particular Congregation for the Government thereof.

THe ruling Officers of a particular Congregation have power authoritatively, to call before them any member of the Congregation as they shall see just occasion.

To enquire into the knowledge and spirituall estate of the several members of the Congregation.

To admonish and rebuke.

Which three branches are proved by *Heb. 13. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. 1 Cor. 14. 24.*

Authoritative suspension from the Lords Table, of a Person not yett cast out of the Church, is agreeable to the Scripture.

First, Because the Ordinance it self must not be prophaned.

Secondly, Because we are charged to withdraw from these that walk disorderly.

Thirdly, Because of the great sin and danger, both to him that comes unworthily, and also to the whole Church, *Mat. 7. 6. 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14, 15. 1 Cor. 11. 27.* to the end of the Chap. compared with *Jude, vers. 23. 1 Tim. 5. 22.* And there was power and authority under the Old Testament, to keep unclean persons from holy things, *Levit. 13. 5. Numb. 9. 7. 2 Chron. 23. 19.*

der the New Testament.

The Ruling Officers of a particular Congregation, have power Authoritatively to suspend from the Lords Table a Person not yett cast out of the Church.

First, Because those who have Authority to judg of, and admit such as are fit to receive the Sacrament, have Authority to keep back such as shal be found unworthy.

Secondly, Because it is an Ecclesiastical business of ordinary practise belonging to that Congregation.

When Congregations are divided and fixed, they need all mutual help one from another, both in regard of their intrinsecal weaknesses and mutual dependence; As also, in regard of enemies from without.

Of Classical Assemblies.

THe Scripture doth hold out a Presbytery in a Church, both in the first Epistle to *Timothy*, Chap. 4. vers. 14. And in *Acts* 15. verses 2, 4, 6.

A Presbytery consisteth of Ministers of the Word, and such other publike Officers as are agreeable to, and warranted by the Word of God, to be Church Governours, to joyn with the Ministers in the Government of the Church, as appeareth, *Rom.* 12. 7, 8. *1 Cor.* 12. 28.

The Scripture doth hold forth, that many particular Congregations may be under one Presbyterial Government.

This proposition is proved by instances.

1. First, Of the Church of *Jerusalem*; which consisteth of more Congregations then one; and all these Congregations were under one Presbyterial Government.

This appeareth thus.

1. First, The Church of *Jerusalem* consisteth of more Congregations then one, as is manifest, first:

By the multitude of Believers mentioned in divers,

Both before the dispersion of the Believers there by means of the persecution (mentioned in the *Acts* of the Apostles, Chap. 8. in the beginning thereof) witnes, Chap. 1. vers. 11. Chap. 2. vers. 41. 46. and 47. Chap. 4. 4. Chap. 5. 14. Chap. 6. of the same Book of the *Acts*, verses 1. 7.

And also after the dispersion, *Acts* 9. 31. Chap. 12. 24. and Chap.

Chap. 21. verse 20. of the same Book.
 Secondly, By the many Apostles and other Preachers in the Church of *Jerusalem*: And if there were but one Congregation there, then each Apostle Preached but seldom; which will not consist with *Chap. 6. verse 2. of the same Book of the Acts of the Apostles.*

Thirdly, The diversity of languages amongst the Believers, mentioned both in the second and sixth Chapters of the *Acts*, doth argue more Congregations then one in that Church.

Secondly, All those Congregations were under one Presbyterial Government, because: First, They were one Church, *Acts 8. 1.* and *Chap. 2. 47.* compared with *Chapter 5. 11. Chap. 12. 5. and Chap. 15. 4. of the same Book.*

Secondly, The Elders of the Church are mentioned, *Acts 11. 30. Chap. 15. 4, 6, 22. and Chapter 21. 17, 18. of the same Book.*

Thirdly, The Apostles did the ordinary Acts of Presbyters, as Presbyters in that Kirk, which proveth a Presbyterial Church before the dispersion, *Acts 6.*

Fourthly, The several Congregations in *Jerusalem* being one Church, the Elders of that Church are mentioned as meeting together for acts of Government, *Acts 11. 39. Acts 15. 4, 6, 22. and Chap. 21. 17, 18. and so forward,* which proves that those severall Congregations were under one Presbyteriall Government.

And whether these Congregations were fixed or not fixed, in regard of Officers or Members, it is all one as to the truth of the Proposition.

Nor doth there appear any material difference betwixt the several Congregations in *Jerusalem*, and the many Congregations now in the ordinary condition of the Church, as to the point of fixedness required of Officers or Members.

Thirdly, Therefore the Scripture doth hold forth, that many Congregations may be under one Presbyteriall Government.

Secondly, By the instance of the Church of *Ephesus*, for,

1. That they were more Congregations then one in the Church of *Ephesus*, appears by *Acts 20. 31.* where is mention of *Pauls* continuance at *Ephesus* in Preaching for the space of three years, and *Acts 19. 18, 19, 20.* where the special effect of the Word is mentioned,

oned, and *vers.* 10, and 17, of the same *Chapter*, where is a distinction of *Jews* and *Greeks*, and 1 *Cor.* 16.8. and 9. where a reason of *Pauls* stay at *Ephesus* untill *Pentecost*, and *vers.* 19. where is mention of a particular Church in the house of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*; then at *Ephesus*, as appears, *Acts* 18.19, 24, 26. all which laid together doth prove, that the multitudes of Believers did make more Congregations then one in the Church of *Ephesus*.

2. That there were many Elders over these many Congregations, as one Flock; appeareth, *Acts* 20.17, 25, 28, 30, 36, 37.

3. That these many Congregations were one Church, and that they were under one Presbyteriall Government, appeareth, *Rev.* 2. the first six *verses*, joyned with *Acts* 20. *verse* 17.18.

Of Synodical Assemblies.

THe Scripture doth hold out another sort of Assemblies for the Government of the Church, beside Cassical and Congregational, all which we call Synodical, *Acts* 15. Pastors and Teachers, and other Church Governors (as also other fit persons, when it shall be deemed expedient) are members of those Assemblies which we call Synodical, where they have a lawfull calling thereunto.

Synodical Assemblies may lawfully be of several sorts, as Provincial, National, and Oecumenical.

It is lawfull and agreeable to the Word of God, that there be a subordination of Congregational, Cassical, Provincial, and National Assemblies for the Government of the Church.

Of Ordination of Ministers.

Under the head of Ordination of Ministers is to be considered, either the Doctrine of Ordination, or the Power of it.

Touching the Doctrine of ORDINATION.

NO man ought to take upon him the office of a Minister of the Word without a lawful calling, *John 3. 37. Rom. 10. 14. 15. Jer. 14. 14. Heb. 5. 4.*

Ordination is always to be continued in the Church, *Tit. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 5. 21, 22.*

Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some publick Church office, *Numb. 8. 10, 11, 14, 19, 22. Acts 6. 3, 5, 6.*

Every Minister of the Word is to be ordained by imposition of hands, and Prayer with Fasting, by those Preaching Presbyters to whom it doth belong, *1 Tim. 5. 22. Acts 14. 23. Acts 13. 3.*

It is agreeable to the Word of God and very expedient, that such as are to be ordained Ministers, be designed to some particular Church or other Ministerial charge, *Acts 14. 23. Tit. 1. 5. Acts 20. 17. and 28.*

He that is to be ordained Minister, must be duly qualified both for life and Ministerial abilities, according to the rules of the Apostle, *1 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. and Tit. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.*

He is to be examined and approved by those by whom he is to be ordained, *1 Tim. 3. v. 7. and 10. and Chap. 5. v. 22.*

No man is to be ordained a Minister for a particular Congregation, if they of that Congregation can shew just cause of exception against him, *1 Tim. 3. 2. Tit. 1. 7.*

Touching the Power of ORDINATION.

Ordination is the act of a Presbytery, *1 Tim. 4. 14.*

The power of ordering the whole work of Ordination, is in the whole Presbytery, which, when it is over more Congregations than one, whether those Congregations be fixed or not fixed, in regard of Officers or Members, it is indifferent as to the point of Ordination, *1 Tim. 4. 14.*

It is very requisite that no single Congregation that can conveniently associate, do assume to it self all and sole power in Ordination.

1. Because there is no example in Scripture, that any single Congregation which might conveniently associate, did assume to it self all and sole power in Ordination, neither is there any rule which

may warrant such a practice.

2. Because there is in Scripture example of an Ordination in a Presbytery over divers Congregations; As in the Church of *Jerusalem*, where were many Congregations, these many Congregations, were under one Presbytery, and this Presbytery did ordain.

The Preaching Presbyters orderly associated either in Cities or neighbouring Villages, are those to whom the imposition of Hands doth appertain for those Congregations within their bounds respectively.

Some other particulars concerning Church Government, do yet remain unfinished, which shall be, with all convenient speed, prepared and presented to this Honorable House.

TO
THE RIGHT HONORABLE
THE
LORDS and COMMONS

Assembled in

PARLIAMENT,

The humble advice of the Assembly
of Divines, now sitting at

WESTMINSTER,

Concerning the Doctrinal part of Ordination
of MINISTERS.

1. NO man ought to take upon him the office of a Minister of the Word without a lawful calling, *John 3. 27. Rom. 10. 14, 15. Jer. 14. 14. Heb. 5. 4.*

2. Ordination is alwaies to be continued in the Church, *Tir. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 5. 21, 22.*

3. Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some publick Church office, *Numb. 8. 10, 11, 14, 19, 22. Acts 6. 3, 5, 6.*

Every

Every Minister of the Word is to be ordained by imposition of hands, and Prayer with Fasting, by these Preaching Presbyters to whom it doth belong, *1 Tim. 5. 22. Acts 14. 23. Acts 13. 3.*

The power of ordering the whole work of Ordination, is in the whole Presbytery, which, when it is over more Congregations than one, whether those Congregations be fixed or not fixed, in regard of Officers or Members, it is indifferent as to the point of Ordination, *1 Tim. 4. 14.*

It is agreeable to the Word of God, and very expedient, that such as are to be ordained Ministers, be designed to some particular Church or other Ministerial charge, *Acts 14. 23. Tit. 1. 5. Acts 20. 17. and 28.*

He that is to be ordained Minister, must be duly qualified both for life and Ministerial abilities, according to the rules of the Apostle, *1 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. and Tit. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.*

He is to be examined and approved of by those by whom he is to be ordained, *1 Tim. 3. 7. 10. 1 Tim. 5. 22.*

No man is to be ordained a Minister for a particular Congregation, if they of that Congregation can shew just cause of exception against him, *1 Tim. 3. 2. Tit. 1. 7.*

Preaching Presbyters orderly associated either in Cities or Neighbouring Villages, are those to whom the imposition of hands doth appertain, for these Congregations within their bounds respectively, *1 Tim. 4. 14.*

In extraordinary cases, something extraordinary may be done, until a settled order may be had, yet keeping as near as possible may be to the Rule, *2 Chro. 29. 34, 35, 36. 2 Chro. 30. 2, 3, 4, 5.*

There is at this time (as we humbly conceive) an extraordinary occasion for a way of Ordination for the present supply of Ministers.

The Directory for Ordination of Ministers.

It being manifest by the Word of God, that no man ought to take upon him the Office of a Minister of the Gospel, until he be lawfully called and ordained thereunto: And that the work of Ordination is to be performed with all due care, wisdom, gravity, and solemnity, we humbly tender these Directions as requisite to be observed.

First,

First, He that is to be ordained being either nominated by the People, or otherwise commended to the Presbytery for any place, must address himself to the Presbytery, and being with him a Testimonial of his taking the Covenant of the three Kingdoms, of his diligence and proficiency in his Studies; What degrees he hath taken in the University, and what hath been the time of his abode there; and withal of his age, which is to be twenty four years, but especially of his life and conversation.

Which being considered by the Presbytery, they are to proceed, to enquire touching the Grace of God in him, and whether he be of such holiness of life as is requisite in a Minister of the Gospel, and to examine him touching his learning and sufficiency, and touching the evidences of his calling to the holy Ministry, and in particular, his fair and direct calling to that place.

The Rules for Examination are these.

1. That the party examined be dealt withal in a Brotherly way, with mildness of spirit, and with special respect to the gravity, modesty, and quality of every one.

2. He that be examined touching his skill in the Original tongues, and his tryal to be made by reading the Hebrew and Greek Testaments, and rendering some portion of some into Latine; And if he be defective in them, enquiry shal be made the more strictly after his other learning, And whether he hath skil in Logick and Philosophy.

3. What Authors in Divinity he hath read, and is best acquainted with; And tryal shal be made in his knowledge of the grounds of Religion, and ability to defend the Orthodox Doctrine contained in them, against all unsound and erroneous opinions, especially these of the present age: of his skil in the sense and meaning of such places of Scripture as shalbe proposed unto him, in cases of Conscience, and in the Chronology of the Scriptura, and the Ecclesiastical History.

4. If he hath not before preached in publick, with approbation of such as are able to judge, he shal, at a competent time assigned him, expounded before the Presbytery such a place of Scripture as shal be given him.

5. He shal also within a competent time, frame a discourse in Latine upon such a Common place or Controversie in Divinity shal be assigned him, and exhibite to the Presbytery such Thesis

as express the sum thereof, and maintain a Dispute upon them.

6. He shall preach before the people, the Presbytery, or some of the Ministers of the Word appointed by them, being present,

7. The proportion of his gifts in relation to the place unto which he is called, shall be considered.

8. Beside the tryal of his gifts in Preaching, he shall undergo an examination in the premises two several dayes, and more, if the Presbytery shall judge it necessary.

9. And as for him that hath been formerly ordained a Minister, and is to be removed to another charge, he shall bring a Testimonial of his Ordination, and of his Abilities and Conversation, whereupon his fitness for that place shall be tryed by his Preaching there; (if it shall be judged necessary) by a further examination of him.

In all which he being approved, he is to be sent to the Church where he is to serve, there to Preach three several days, and to converse with the People, that they may have tryal of his Gifts for their edification, and may have time and occasion to enquire into, and the better to know his life and conversation.

In the last of these three days appointed for the tryal of his gifts in Preaching, there shall be sent from the Presbytery to the Congregation, a publick intimation in writing, which shall be publicly read before the people; And after affixed to the Church door, to signify that such a day, a competent number of the Members of that Congregation nominated by themselves, shall appear before the Presbytery, to give their consent and approbation to such a man to be their Minister, or otherwise to put in with all Christian discretion and meekness what exceptions they have against him, and if upon the day appointed there be no just exception against him, but the People give their consent, then the Presbytery shall proceed to Ordination.

Upon the day appointed for Ordination, which is to be performed in that Church, where he that is to be ordained is to serve, a solemn Fast shall be kept by the Congregation, that they may the more earnestly joyn in Prayer, for a blessing upon the Ordinance of Christ, and the labours of his Servant for their good. The Presbytery shall come to the place,

or at least three or four Ministers of the Word shall be sent thither from the Presbytery; Of which one appointed by the Presbytery, shall Preach to the people concerning the office and duty of Ministers of Christ, and how the people ought to receive them for their work sake.

6. After the Sermon, the Minister who hath Preached, shall in the face of the Congregation, demand of him who is now to be ordained concerning his faith in Christ Jesus, and his perswasion of the truth of the Reformed Religion according to the Scripture; His sincere intentions and ends in desiring to enter into this Calling; His diligence in Praying, Reading, Meditation, Preaching, Ministering the Sacraments, Discipline, and doing all Ministerial Duties towards his Charge; His Zeal and Faithfulness in maintaining the Truth of the Gospel, and Unity of the Church against Heresy and Schism; His care that himself and his Family may be unblameable and examples to the Flock; His willingness and humility in meekness of Spirit, to submit unto the admonitions of his Brethren and Discipline of the Church; And his resolution to continue in his duty against all trouble and persecution.

In all which having declared himself, professed his willingness and promised his endeavours by the help of God; The Minister likewise shall demand of the People, concerning their willingness to receive and acknowledge him as the Minister of Christ, and to obey and submit unto him, as having rule over them in the Lord, and to maintain, encourage and assist him in all the parts of his Office.

Which being mutually promised by the People, the Presbytery or the Ministers sent from them for Ordination, shall solemnly set him apart to the Office and Work of the Ministry, by laying their hands on him, which is to be accompanied with a short Prayer or Blessing to this effect.

8. Thankfully acknowledging the great mercy of God, in sending Jesus Christ for the Redemption of his people, and for the ascription to the right hand of God the Father, and thence pouring out his Spirit, and giving gifts to Men, Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastors, and Teachers, for the gathering and building up of his Church, and sanctifying and living in his man to his great glory, To exalt him so forth with his holy Spirit, to give him of whom his name we thus set apart to this holy service) to fulfil the work of his

his Ministry in all things, that he may both save himself and his people committed to his charge.

This or the like form of prayer and blessing being ended, let the Minister who preached, briefly exhort him to consider of the greatness of his Office and Work, the danger of negligence both to himself and his People, the blessing which will accompany his faithfulness in this life, and that to come: And withall exhort the people to carry themselves to him as to their Minister in the Lord, according to their solemn promise made before; And so by prayer commending both him and his Flock to the Grace of God; after singing of a Psalm, let the Assembly be dismissed with a Blessing.

If a Minister be designed to a Congregation, who hath been formerly ordained Presbyter according to the form of Ordination which hath been in the Church of England, which we hold for substance to be valide, and not to be disclaimed by any who have received it: Then there being a cautious proceeding in matters of Examination, let him be admitted without any new Ordination.

And in case any Person already ordained Minister in Scotland or in any other Reformed Church, be designed to a Congregation in England, he is to bring from that Church to the Presbytery here, within which that Congregation is, a sufficient testimonial of his Ordination; of his life and conversation while he lived with them, and of the causes of his removal; And to undergo such a tryal of his fitness and sufficiency, and to have the same course held with him in other particulars, as is set down in the rule immediately going before touching Examination and Admission.

That Records be carefully kept in the several Presbyteries of the names of the Persons ordained with their testimonials, the time and place of their Ordination, of the Presbyters who did impose hands upon them, and of the charge to which they are appointed.

That no Money or Gift, of what kind soever, shall be received from the Person to be ordained, or from any, on his behalf, for Ordination or ought else belonging to it, by any of the Presbytery, or any appertaining to any of them upon what pretence soever.

Thus far of ordinary rules and course of Ordination in the ordinary way: That which concerns the extraordinary way requisite to be now practised, followeth.

1. In these present exigencies while we cannot have any Presbyteries formed up to their whole power and work, and that many Ministers are to be ordained for the service of the Armies and Navy, and too many Congregations where there is no Minister at all; and where (by reason of the publike troubles) the people cannot either themselves enquire out and find out one who may be a faithful Minister for them, or have any with safety sent unto them for such a solemn tryal as was before mentioned in the ordinary Rules, especially when there can be no Presbytery near unto them, to whom they may address themselves, or which may come or send to them a fit man to be ordained in that Congregation, and for that people: And yet notwithstanding, it is requisite that Ministers be ordained for them, by some; who being set apart themselves for the work of the Ministry, have power to joyn in the setting apart of others, who are found fit and worthy. In those cases, until by Gods Blessing the aforesaid difficulties may be in some good measure removed; let some godly Ministers in or about the City of London, be designed by publike authority; who being associated, may ordain Ministers for the City, and the Vicinity, keeping as near to the ordinary Rules forementioned, as possible they may: And let this association be for no other intent or purpose, but only for the work of Ordination.
2. Let the like association be made by the same authority in great Towns, and the Neighbouring Parishes in the several Countys, which are at the present quiet and un-disturbed, to do the like for the parts adjacent.
3. Let such as are chosen or appointed for the service of the Armies or Navie be ordained as aforesaid, by the associated Ministers of London, or some others in the Country.
4. Let them do the like, when any man shal duly and lawfully be recommended to them for the Ministry of any Congregation, who cannot enjoy liberty to have a tryal of his parts and abilities, and desire the help of such Ministers so associated, for the better furnishing of them with such a Person, as by them shal be judged fit for the service of that Church and People.

Generalis Burgess & Locutor & Impres.
Henry Robbrough, Secr.
Adam Bram Byfield, Secr.

A Directory for Church Government and Or-
 dination of Ministers; To be examined a-
 gainst the next GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The Preface.

JESUS Christ upon whose shoulders the Government is, whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, of the encrease of whose Government and Peace there shall be no end, who sits upon the throne of *David*, and upon his Kingdom to order it, and to establish it with Judgment and Justice, from henceforth even for ever, having all power given unto him in Heaven and in Earth by the Father, who raised him from the dead and set him on his own Right Hand, far above all Principalities and Power, and Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come, and put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all; He being ascended up far above all Heavens, that he might fill all things, received gifts for his Church, and gave offices necessary for the edification of his Church, and perfecting of his Saints.

Of the Church.

THERE is one General Church visible held forth in the New Testament, unto which General Church visible, the Ministry, Oracles, and Ordinances of the New Testament, are given by Jesus Christ, for the gathering and perfecting of the Saints in this life until his second coming.

Particular visible Churches, Members of the General Church are also held forth in the new Testament, which Particular Churches in the Primitive times were made up of visible Saints *viz.* Of such as, being of age, professed faith in Christ, and obedience unto Christ (according to the Rules of Faith and Life taught by him and his Apostles) and of their Children.

Of the Officers of the Church.

Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists were extraordinary Officers in the Church, and are ceased.

The Pastor is an ordinary and perpetual Officer in the Church; To whose Office it belongeth to pray, for and with his Flock; To read the Scripture publickly in the Congregation, which is an holy Ordinance in Gods Church, although there follow no immediate explication of what is read; To preach the Word, to be instant in season and out of season; To reprove, correct, instruct, rebuke, exhort, convince and comfort: One special way of discharging which work of Preaching, is, by a plain laying down the first principles of the Oracles of God, which is commonly called *Catechising*; to administer the Sacraments; in the Name of God to bless the people; To take care for the poor; And he hath also a ruling power over the Flock as a Pastor.

In the Scripture we also find the name and title of Teacher, who is a Minister of the Word, and hath power of administration of the Sacraments and Discipline, as well as the Pastor.

The Lord having given different gifts, and divers exercises according to those gifts, in the Ministers of the Word, though these different gifts may meet in, and accordingly be exercised by one and the same Minister, yet where there be several Ministers in the same Congregation, they may be designed to several employments, according to the different gifts where in each of them doth excel. And he who doth more excel in exposition of Scripture, in teaching sound Doctrine, and in convincing gain-sayers, then he doth in application, and is accordingly employed therein, may be called a Teacher, or Doctor. Nevertheless, where there is but one Minister in a particular Congregation, he is to perform, so far as he is able, the whole work of the Ministry.

A Teacher or Doctor is of most excellent use: Schools and Universities, as of old in the Schools of the Prophet at Jerusalem, where *Gamaliel* and others taught as Doctors. It is likewise agreeable to, and warranted by the Word of God, that some others, beside the Ministers of the Word, be Church Governors, to joyn with the Ministers in the Government of the Church; which Officers, Reformed Churches commonly call Elders.

These Elders ought to be such as are men of good understanding in matters of Religion, sound in the faith, prudent, discreet, grave and of unblameable conversation.

Deacons also are distinct Officers in the Church: To whose office it belongs not, to preach the Word or administer the Sacraments, but to take special care for the necessities of the poor, by collecting for, and distributing to them with direction of the Eldership, that none amongst the people of God be constrained to be beggars. The Deacons must be wise, sober, grave, of honest report, and not greedy of filthy lucre.

Of Church Government, and the several sorts of Assemblies for the same.

Christ hath instituted a Government, and Governors Ecclesiastical in the Church, and to that purpose the Apostles did immediately receive the keys from the hand of Jesus Christ, and did use & exercise them in all the Churches of the world upon all occasions.

And Christ hath from time to time furnished some in his Church with gifts of Government, and with commission to execute the same when called thereunto.

It is agreeable to and warranted by the Word of God, that some others beside the Ministers of the Word, be Church Governors, as was mentioned before.

It is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that the Church be governed by several sorts of Assemblies; Which are Presbyteries and Synods, or Assemblies, Congregational, Classical, and Synodical.

The Scripture doth hold out a Presbytery in a Church; which Presbytery consisteth of Ministers of the Word, and those other Church Officers who are to join with the Ministers in the Government of the Church.

The Scripture doth hold out another sort of Assemblies for the Government of the Church, besides Classical and Congregational, which we call Synodical.

Of the power in Common of all these Assemblies, and the order to be observed in them.

It is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God; that the several Assemblies, before mentioned; do convene and call before them any person within their several bounds, whom the Ecclesiastical business which is before them shall concern, either as a party, or a witness, or otherwise, and to examine them according to the nature of the business. And that they do hear and determine such causes and differences as shall orderly come before them, and accordingly dispence Church censures.

It is most expedient that in these meetings, one whose Office is to labour in the Word and Doctrine, do moderate in their proceedings, who is to vote as well as the rest of the members: To begin and end every meeting with prayer; To propose questions, gather the votes, pronounce the Resolves: But not to do any act of Government, unless in & joyntly with the Assembly whereof he is moderator.

All the members of these Assemblies respectively, are to attend on the appointed days of their meetings, or to send the reason of their absence to be judged by the Assembly where they ought to meet.

The final resolutions shal be by the Major part of the votes of those members who are present.

Of Particular Congregations.

IT is expedient that particular Congregations be fixed, both in their Officers and Members, which are to meet in the same Assembly ordinarily for publike worship.

When their number is great, that they cannot conveniently meet in one place, it is expedient that they be divided according to the respective bounds of their dwellings into distinct and fixed Congregations, for the better administration of such Ordinances as belong unto them, and the discharge of mutual duties, wherein all, according to their several place and callings, are to labour to promote what ever appertains to the power of Godliness, and credit of Religion, that the whole Land in the full extent of it, may become the Kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ.

Parochial Congregations in this Kingdom, consisting of Ministers and People, who profess faith in Christ, and obedience unto Christ, according to the rules of Faith and Life taught by him and his Apostles; and joyn together in the publick worship of hearing, praying, & administration of the Sacraments, are Churches truly constituted.

If any person or persons in the Congregation, do not answer his, or their profession, but by open sin and wickedness cross and deny it, or if there be a want of some Officers, or a sinful neglect of Officers in the due execution of Discipline; yet this doth not make that Congregation cease to be a Church, but requires that there should be a supply of Officers which are wanting; and a careful endeavour for the Reformation of the offended Person or Persons, and of negligent Officers by just censures, according to the nature of the cause.

Communion and Membership in Congregations thus constituted, notwithstanding the forementioned defects is not unlawful: And to refuse or renounce Membership and Church communion, or to separate from Church communion with Congregations thus constituted, as unlawfull to be joyned with, in regard of their constitution, is not warranted by the Word of God.

Separation

Separation from a Church thus constituted, where the Government is lawfull, upon an opinion that it is unlawfull, and that therefore all the godly are also bound to separate from all such Churches so constituted and governed, and to joyn themselves to another Church of another Constitution and Government; is not warranted by the word of God, but contrary to it.

To gather Churches into an independent forme of Government out of Churches of a Presbyteriall forme of Government is unlawfull, is not lawfull or warranted by the Word of God; Nor is it lawfull for any member of a Parochiall Congregation, if the Ordinances be there administred in purity, to go and seek them elsewhere ordinarily.

Of Ordinances in a particular Congregation.

Ordinances in a particular Congregation, are Prayer, Thanksgiving, singing of Psalms, reading of the Word, Preaching and Catechizing, administring the Sacraments, blessing the people in the Name of God, and collection for the Poor. As for Discipline, wee refer our selves to what wee have elsewhere expressed.

Of the Officers of a particular Congregation.

IN the Congregation there must be some who are set apart to bear Office: One at the least to labour in the Word and Doctrine, and to rule; And let others be chosen ruling Elders to joyn with him in Government.

When any ruling Elder is to be chosen, where an Eldership is constituted, let it be done by them, with the consent and approbation of the people of that Congregation, and that not for a limited time: Yet the exercise of their Office may be so ordered by the Eldership, as that their civill employments be least hindered thereby.

Where there are many ruling Officers in a particular Congregation, let some of them more especially attend the inspection of one part, some of another, as may be most convenient; and let them at fit times visit the severall Families for their spirituall good.

Let there be also Deacons to take speciall care for the reliefe

of the poore; who are likewise to be chosen by the Eldership, with the consent of the people of that Congregation; and the continuance of them in that Office is to be determined by the Eldership, with the consent of the Congregation, so as may least hinder their civill employment.

These Officers are to meet together at convenient and set times for the well ordering of the affairs of that Congregation; each according to his Office.

The number of Elders and Deacons in each Congregation, is to be proportioned according to the condition of the Congregation.

Of Congregationall Elderships, or Assemblies for Governing in a particular Congregation.

THE Congregationall Eldership consisting of the Minister, or Ministers, and the other ruling Officers of that Congregation, hath power as they shall see just occasion to enquire into the knowledge and spirituall estate of any member of the Congregation: To admonish and rebuke; To suspend from the Lords table; though the person be not yet cast out of the Church. All which is agreeable to the Word of God: Although the truth of conversion and regeneration be necessary to every worthy communicant for his own comfort and benefit, yet those onely are to be by the Eldership excluded, or suspended from the Lords Table; who are found by them to be ignorant or scandalous.

Where there are more fixed Ministers then one in a Congregation, it is expedient, that they moderate by course in that Eldership.

of classickall Assemblies.

WHen Congregations are divided and fixed, they need all mutuall help one from another, both in regard of their intrinsicall weaknesse, and mutuall dependance: as also in regard of Enemies from without.

The Scripture doth hold forth; that many particular Congregations may be under one Presbyteriall Government.

A Classickall Presbytery is an Assembly made up of Ministers of the Word, and other ruling Officers belonging unto severall Neighbouring Congregations. and doth ordinarily consist of all the

the Pastors and Teachers belonging to those severall Congregations so associated, and of one of the other ruling Officers at the least from every of these Congregations, to be sent by their respective Presbyteries.

Let them meet once every Moneth, or oftner, as occasion shall require, in such place as they shall judge most convenient. And before they sit about other businesse, let there be a Sermon or Exposition of Scripture made by some Minister of that Classis or Expectant, as they shall agree amongst themselves.

For the more orderly managing of such affairs as come before them; let there be one Moderator chosen by the Classis at every meeting out of the Ministers of the Word, who shall continue till the next meeting.

To the enabling them to performe any Classicall act of Government or Ordination, there shall be there present a major part at least of the Ministers of the whole Classis.

It belongeth unto Classicall Presbyteries,

To consider of, to debate and to resolve according to Gods Word such cases of conscience, or other difficulties in Doctrine, as are brought unto them out of their association, according as they shall finde needfull for the good of the Churches.

To examine and censure according to the Word any erroneous Doctrine, which have been either publikely or privately vented within their association, to the corrupting of the judgements of men, and to endeavour the converting and reducing of Recusants, or any other in Errour or Schisme.

To order all Ecclesiasticall matters of common concernment within the bounds of their association.

To take cognizance of causes omitted or neglected in particular Congregations, and to receive appeals from them.

To dispence censures in cases within their cognizance, by Admonition, Suspension, or Excommunication.

To admonish or further to censure scandalous Ministers whether in Life or Doctrine, according to the nature of the offence, and that not only for such offences, for which any other Member of the Congregation shall incur any censure of the Church (in which case he is to be censured by the Classis with the like censure for the like offence) but likewise particularly for Symony, entering into any Ministeriall charge, without allowance of authority, false Doctrine, affected lightnesse and vanity in Preaching,

wilfull neglect of Preaching, or slight performance of it, wilfull Non-residence from his Charge without call or cause approved by the Classis, neglect of administration of the Sacraments, or other Ministeriall duties required of him in the Directory of Worship, depraving and speaking reproachfully against the wholesome orders by authority settled in the Church, casting reproach upon the power of Godliness, which he by his office ought chiefly to promote. Yet so as that no Minister be deposed, but by the resolution of a Synode.

To examine, ordain, and admit Ministers for the Congregations respectively therein associated, according to the advice formerly sent up to the Honourable Houses of Parliament.

Of Synodicall Assemblies.

Synodicall Assemblies do consist of Pastors, Teachers, Church-Governours, and other fit Persons (when it shall be deemed expedient) where they have a lawfull calling thereunto.

These Assemblies have Ecclesiasticall power and authority to judge and determine controversies of Faith and cases of Conscience according to the Word.

They may also lawfully excommunicate and dispenſe other Church censures.

Synodicall Assemblies are of severall sorts, viz. Provincially, Nationall, Oecumenicall.

Of Provinciall Assemblies.

Let Provinciall Assemblies generally be bounded according to the civill division of the Kingdome, into Counties: and where any very great Counties are divided within themselves, let the Provinciall Assemblies follow these divisions, as in the Ridings of *Yorkshire*.

Provinciall Assemblies consist of Delegats sent from severall Classes within that Province; whose number shall exceed the number of any one Classicall Presbytery within that Province: And to that end, there shall be at the least two Ministers, and two ruling Elders out of every Classis, and where it shall appear necessary to encrease the number, let it not exceed six of each from any one Classis

Let these Assemblies meet twice every year : And for enabling them unto any act of Government, let there be a major part at least of the Ministers delegated from the severall Classes.

Of the Nationall Assembly.

THe Nationall Assembly consists of Ministers and Ruling Elders delegated from each Provinciall Assembly. The number of which delegats shall be three Ministers, and three Ruling Elders out of every Province, and five Learned and Godly Persons from each Univerfity.

Let this Assembly meet once every year, and oftner if there shall be caufe.

The first time to be appointed by the Honourable Houses of Parliament.

Of the subordination of these Assemblies.

IT is lawfull and agreeable to the Word of God, that there be a subordination of Congregationall, Classicall, Provinciall, and Nationall Assemblies for the Government of the Church, that so appeals may be made from the inferiour to the superiour respectively.

The Provinciall and Nationall Assemblies, are to have the same power in all points of Government and censures, brought before them within their severall bounds respectively, as is before expressed to belong to Classicall Presbyteries within their severall associations.

The Directory for Church censures.



Church censures and Discipline, for judging and removing of offences, being of great use and necessity in the Church, that the name of God, by reason of ungodly and wicked persons living in the Church be not blasphemed, nor his wrath provoked against his people; that the Godly be not leavened with, but preserved from the contagion, and stricken with fear; and that the sinners

who are to be censured, may be shamed, to the destruction of the flesh, and saving of the Spirit in the day of the Lord Jesus ; We judge this course of proceeding therein to be requisite.

The order of proceeding with offenders who before excommunication manifest Repentance.

VWhen the offence is private, the order of admonition prescribed by our Lord, *Mat.* 18. 15. is in all wisdom and love to be observed, that the offender may either be recovered by Repentance ; Or, if he adde obstinacie or contempt to his fault, he may be but off by Excommunication.

If the sinne be publicly scandalous, and the sinner being examined, be judged to have the signes of unfeigned Repentance, and nothing justly objected against it, when made known to the people, let him be admitted to publike confession of his sinne, and manifestation of his Repentance before the Congregation.

When the penitent is brought before the Congregation, the Minister is to declare his sinne, whereby he hath provoked Gods wrath, and offended his People, his confession of it, and profession of unfeigned Repentance for it, and of his resolution (through the strength of Christ) to sinne no more, and his desire of their Prayers for mercy, and grace to be kept from falling again into that or any the like sinne : Of all which the penitent also is to make a full and free expression, according to his ability.

Which being done, the Minister, after prayer to God for the penitent, is to admonish him to walk circumspectly, and the people to make a right use of his fall, and rising again ; and so, to declare that the congregation resteth satisfied.

The order of proceeding to Excommunication.

Excommunication being a shutting out of a Person from the Communion of the Church (and therefore the greatest and last censure of the Church) ought not to be inflicted without great and mature deliberation, nor till all other good meanes have been assayed.

Such errors as subvert the Faith, or any other errors which overthrow the power of Godliness, if the party who holds them spread them, seeking to draw others after him ; and such sinne

in practise, as cause the Name and Truth of God to be blasphemed, and cannot stand with the power of Godliness, and such practises as in their own nature manifestly subvert that Order, Unity, and Peace, which Christ hath established in his Church; Those being publicly known, to the just scandal of the Church, the sentence of Excommunication shall proceed according to the Directory.

But the persons who hold other errors in judgement about points wherein learned and godly men possibly may, or do differ, and which subvert not the Faith, nor are destructive to godliness; Or that be guilty of such finnes of infirmity, as are commonly found in the children of God; Or, being otherwise found in the Faith, and holy in life (and so not falling under censure by the former Rules) endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and do yet out of conscience not come up to the observation of all those rules, which are or shall be established by Authority for regulating the outward Worship of God, and Government of his Church, we do not discern to be such against whom the sentence of Excommunication for these causes should be denounced.

When the sinne becomes publike and justly scandalous, the offender is to be dealt withall by the Eldership, to bring him to Repentance, and to such a manifestation thereof, as that his Repentance may be publike as the scandal: But if he remaine obstinate, he is at last to be excommunicated, and in the meane time to be suspended from the Lords Supper.

And whereas there be divers and various judgements touching the power of Excommunication, and the proper subject thereof, we conceive that for clearing of difficulties, avoiding of offences, preservation of peace, and such like, these following Directions are fit to be observed.

In the great and difficult cases of Excommunication, whether concerning doctrine or conversation, the Classicall Presbytery upon the knowledge thereof, may examine the person, consider the nature of the offence, with the aggravations thereof: and as they shall see just cause, may declare and discern that he is to be excommunicated, which shall be done by the Eldership of that Congregation whereof he is a member, with the consent of the Congregation, in this or the like manner.

As there shall be cause, severall publick admonitions shall be given

given to the offender (if he appear) and prayers made for him.

When the offence is so hainous that it cries to Heaven for vengeance, wasteth the conscience, and is generally scandalous, the censures of the church may proceed with more expedition:

In the admonitions, let the fact be charged upon the offender, with the cleare evidence of the guilt thereof; Then let the nature of his sinne, the particular aggravations of it, the punishments and curses threatned against it, the danger of impenitency, especially after such meanes used, the wofull condition of them cast out from the favour of God and communion of the Saints, the great mercy of God in Christ to the penitent, how ready and willing Christ is to forgive, and the Church to accept him upon his serious repentance; Let these or the like particulars be urged upon him, out of some suitable places of the holy Scriptures.

The same particulars may be mentioned in Prayer, wherein the Lord is to be intreated to blesse this admonition to him, and to affect his heart with the consideration of these things, thereby to bring him unto true repentance.

If upon the last admonition and prayer there be no evidence nor signe of his repentance, let the dreadfull sentence of Excommunication be pronounced, with calling upon the name of God, in these or the like expressions.

Speak this
in the
third Per-
son, if the
parry be
absent.

Whereas thou N. hast been by sufficient prooffe convicted of (here mention the Sin) and, after due admonition and prayer remainest obstinate, without any evidence or signe of true repentance; Therefore, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and before this Congregation, I pronounce and declare thee N. excommunicated, and shut out from communion of the faithfull.

Let the prayer accompanying Sentence be to this effect.

That God who hath appointed this terrible Sentence for removing of offenders, and reducing of obstinate sinners, would be present with this his ordinance, to make it effectfull to all these holy ends, for which he hath appointed it, that this retaining of the offenders sinne, and shutting him out of the Church, may fill him with feare and shame, and break his obstinate heart, and be a means to destroy the flesh, and to recover him from the power of the devill, that his spirit may yet be saved, that others also may be stricken with feare, and not dare to sinne so presumptuously

sumptuously, and that all such corrupt leaven being purged out of the Church (which is the house of God) Jesus Christ may delight to dwell in the midst of them.

After the denunciation of this Sentence, the people are to be warned, that they hold him to be cast out of the communion of the Church, and to shun all communion with him. Nevertheless, Excommunication dissolveth not the bonds of civill or naturall relations, nor exempt from the duties belonging to them.

This sentence is likewise to be made known, not only to that, but to any other Classis or Congregation, as occasion shall require, by reason of his abode or conversing with them.

The order of proceeding to Absolution.

IF after excommunication, the signes of repentance appear in the excommunicated person, such as godly sorrow for sin, as having thereby incurred Gods heavy displeasure, occasioned griefe to his brethren, and justly provoked them to cast him out of their communion; together with a full purpose of heart to turne from his sin unto God, and to reforme what hath been amisse in him; with an humble desire of recovering his peace with God and his people, and to be restored to the light of Gods countenance, and the communion of the Church; he is of be brought before the Congregation, and there also to make free confession of his sin, with sorrow for it, to call upon God for mercy in Christ, to seek to be restored to the communion of the Church; promising to God new obedience, and to them more holy and circumspect walking as becometh the Gospel: He is to be pronounced in the Name of Christ absolved and free from the censures of the Church, and declared to have right to all the Ordinances of Christ, with praising of God for his Grace, and Prayer that he may be fully accepted to his favour, and heare joy and gladnesse, to this effect.

To praise God who delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but that he may repent and live, for blessing the Ordinance of Excommunication, and making it effectuell by his Spirit, to the recovering of this offender; To magnifie the mercy of God through Jesus Christ in pardoning and receiving to his favour, the most grievous offenders, whensoever they unsaindly repent and forsake their finnes.

To pray for assistance of mercy and forgivenesse to this Penitent, and so to blesse his Ordinance of Absolution, that he may finde himselfe loosed

thereby; and that the Lord w^d henceforth support and strengthen him by his Spirit, that being sown in the faith, and holy in all manner of conversation, God may be honoured, the Church edified, and himself saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Then shall follow the sentence of Absolution, in these or the like words.

Whereas thou N. hast for thy sinne been shut out from the Communion of the faithfull, and hast now manifested thy repentance, wherein the Church reflecteth satisfied, In the Name of Jesus Christ, before this Congregation, I pronounce and declare thee absolved from the sentence of Excommunication formerly denounced against thee, and do receive thee to the Communion of the Church, and the free use of all the Ordinances of Christ, that thou mayest be partakers of all his benefits to thy eternall salvation.

After this Sentence of Absolution, the Minister speaketh to him as to a Brother, exhorting him to watch and pray, or comforting him, if there be need, the elders embrace him, and the whole Congregation holdeth communion with him as one of their own.

Although it be the duty of Pastors and other ruling officers to use all diligence and vigilancy both by Doctrine and Discipline respectively for the preventing and purging out such Errors, Heresies, Schismes, and scandals, as tend to the detriment and disturbance of the Church: Yet because it may fall out through the pride and stubbornnesse of offenders, that these meanes alone will not be effectuell to that purpose; It is therefore necessary, after all this to implore the aid of the Civill Magistrate, who ought to use his coercive power for the suppressing of all such offences, and vindicating the discipline of the Church from contempt.

Of Ordination of Ministers.

Because no man ought to take upon him the office of a Minister of the Word without a lawfull Call, therefore, Ordination which is the solemne setting apart of a person, unto some publike Church office, is alwaies to be continued in the Church.

When he who is to be ordained Minister, hath been first duely examined touching his fitnessse, both for life and Ministeriall abilities, according to the rules of the Apostle, by those who are to ordaine

ordination, and hath been by them approved; He is then to be ordained by imposition of hands and prayer with fasting. But if any person be found unfit, he is not to be ordained.

It is agreeable to the Word and very expedient, that such as are to be ordained Ministers be designed to some particular Church, or other Ministeriall charge.

Ordination is the act of a Presbyterie unto which the power of ordering the whole worke belongs; yet so as that the preaching Presbyters orderly associated either in Cities, or in neighbouring villages, are those to whom the imposition of hands doth appertain, for those Congregations within their bounds respectively. And therefore it is very requisite that no single Congregation which can conveniently associate, do assume to it self all and sole power in Ordination.

No person or persons may or ought to nominate, appoint, or chuse any man to be a Minister for a Congregation, who is not fit and able for that worke: And if any unfit man be nominated to the Classicall Presbytery, they are to refuse to admit him.

When any Minister is to be ordained for a particular Congregation, or translated from one place to another, the people of that Congregation to which he is to be ordained or admitted, shall have notice of it, and if they shew just cause of exception against him, he is not to be ordained or admitted. And in the meane time till one be admitted, the Presbytery shall provide for the supply of the Congregation.

The Congregation, if they conceive themselves wronged by any act of the Presbytery, shall have liberty to appeal to the next Synod, which upon hearing of the matter, shall judge as the cause shall require.

The Directory for Ordination of Ministers.

IT being manifest by the Word of God that no man ought to take upon him the office of a Minister of the Gospell untill he be lawfully called and ordained thereunto; and that the work of Ordination is to be performed with all due care, wisdom, gravity, and solemnity; we humbly tender these Directions as requisite to be observed.

He that is to be ordained, being either nominated by the people, or otherwise commended to the Presbytery for any place, must

addresse himselfe to the Presbytery, and bring with him a testimoniall of his taking the Covenant of the three Kingdoms, of his diligence and proficiency in his Studies, what degrees he hath taken in the Univerſity, and what hath been the time of his abode there, and withall of his age, which is to be foure and twenty yeares, but eſpecially of his life and converſation.

2 Which being conſidered by the Presbyterie, they are to proceed to enquire touching the Grace of God in him, and whether he be of ſuch holineſſe of life as is requiſite in a Miniſter of the Goſpel : And to examine him touching his learning and ſufficiency : and touching the evidences of his calling, to the holy Miniſtery, and in particular his fair and direct calling to that place.

The Rules for examination are theſe.

1 That the party be dealt with in a brotherly way, with mildneſſe of ſpirit, and with ſpeciall reſpect to the gravity, modeſty, and quality of every one,

2 He ſhall be examined touching his ſkill in the Originall tongues, and the tryall to be made by reading the Hebrew and Greek Testaments, and rendring ſome portion of them into Latine ; and if he be defective in them, enquiry ſhall be made the more ſtrictly after his other learning, and whether he hath ſkill in Logick and Philoſophy.

3 What Authors in Divinity he hath read, and is beſt acquainted with ; And tryall ſhall be made of his knowledge in the chief grounds of Religion, and of his ability to defend the Orthodox Doctrine contained in them, againſt all unſound and erroneous opinions, eſpecially thoſe of the preſent age : of his ſkill in the ſence and meaning of ſuch places of Scripture as ſhall be propoſed to him, in caſes of Conſcience, in the Chronologie of Scripture, and the Eccleſiaſticall Hiſtory.

4 If he hath not preached in publike, with approbation of ſuch as are able to judge, he ſhall at a competent time aſſigned him, expound before the Presbyterie ſuch a place of Scripture as ſhall be given him.

5 He ſhall alſo within a competent time, frame a diſcourſe in Latine, upon ſuch a Common place or Controverſie in Divinity as ſhall be aſſigned him, and exhibite to the Presbyterie ſuch Theſes as expreſſe the ſumme thereof, and maintaine a Diſpute upon them.

6 He ſhall Preach before the People, the Presbyterie or ſome of the Miniſters of the Word appointed by them, being preſent.

7 The proportion of his gifts in relation to the place unto which he is called, ſhall be conſidered.

8 Beſide

8 Beside the triall of his gifts in Preaching, he shall undergoe an examination in the premisses two severall dayes or more, if the Presbyterie shall judge it necessary.

9 And as for him that hath been formerly ordained a Minister, and is to be removed to another charge, he shall bring a Testimoniall of his Ordination, and of his abilities and conversation, whereupon his fittesse for that place shall be tryed by his Preaching there, and (if it shall be judged necessary) by a further examination of him.

3 In all which he being approved, he is to be sent to the Church where he is to serve, there to Preach three severall dayes, and to converse with the people, that they may have triall of his gifts for their edification, and may have time and occasion to inquire into, and the better to know his life and conversation.

4 In the last of these three dayes appointed for the triall of his gifts in Preaching, there shall be sent from the Presbiterie to the Congregation a publike intimation in writing, which shall be publickly read before the people, and after affixed to the Church door, To signifie that such a day a competent number of the Members of that Congregation nominated by themselves, shall appeare before the Presbyterie, to give their consent and approbation to such a man to be their Minister: Or otherwise to put in with all Christian discretion and meeknesse, what exceptions they have against him. And if upon the day appointed, there be no just exception against him, but the people give their consent, then the Presbyterie shall proceed to Ordination.

5 Upon the day appointed for Ordination, which is to be performed in that Church where he that is to be ordained is to serve. A solemne fast shall be kept by the Congregation, that they may the more earnestly joyne in prayer for a blessing upon the ordination of Christ, and the labours of his Servants for their good. The Presbyterie shall come to the place, or at least three or foure Ministers of the World shall be sent thither from the Presbyterie, of which one appointed by the Presbyterie, shall Preach to the people concerning the office and duty of the Ministers of Christ, and how the people ought to receive them for their works sake.

6 After the Sermon, the Minister who hath Preached, shall in the face of the Congregation demand of him who is now to be ordained concerning his faith in Christ Jesus, and his perswasion of the Truth of the Reformed Religion according to the Scrip-
ture;

nure; his sincere intentions and ends in desiring to enter into this Calling; his diligence in Praying, Reading, Meditation, Preaching, ministering the Sacraments, Discipline, and doing all other Ministeriall duties toward his charge; his zeal and faithfulness in maintaining the Truth of the Gospel, and Unity of the Church against Error and Schisme; his care that himselfe and his Family may be unblameable and examples to the flock; his willingness and humility in meeknesse of Spirit to submit unto the admonitions of his Brethren and Discipline of the Church, and his resolution to continue in his duty against all troubles and persecution.

7 In all which having declared himself, professed his willingness, and promised his endeavours by the help of God. The Minister likewise shall demand of the people concerning their willingness to receive and acknowledge him as the Minister of Christ, and to obey and submit unto him, as having rule over them in the Lord, and to maintaine, encourage, and assist him in all the parts of his office.

8 Which being mutually promised by the people, the Presbytery, or the Ministers sent from them for Ordination, shall solemnly set him apart to the Office and Work of the Ministry, by laying their hands on him, which is to be accompanied with a short Prayer, or Blessing to this effect.

Thankfully acknowledging the great mercy of God, in sending Jesus Christ for the Redemption of his People, and for his ascension to the right hand of the Father, and thence pouring out his Spirit, and giving gifts to Men, Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastors, and Teachers, for the gathering and building up of his Church, and for fitting and enclining this man to this great Work; To entreat him to fill him with his holy Spirit, to give him (whom in his Name we thus set apart to this holy Service) to fulfill the Work of his Ministry in all things, that he may both save himselfe and the People committed to his charge.

9 This or the like forme of Prayer or Blessing being ended, let the Minister who Preached, briefly exhort him to consider the greatnesse of his Office and Work, the danger of negligence both to himselfe and his people, the Blessing which will accompany his faithfulness in this life and that to come; And withall exhort the People to carry themselves to him as to their Minister in the

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the Lord according to their solemn promise made before. And so by prayer both commending Him and his Flock to the grace of God. After the singing of a Psalm, let the Assembly be dismissed with a Blessing.

10 If a Minister be designed to a Congregation, who hath been formerly ordained Presbyter according to the forme of Ordination which hath been in the Church of *England*, which we hold for substance to be valid, and not to be disclaimed by any who have received it; Then there being a cautious proceeding in matter of examination, let him be admitted without any new Ordination.

11 And in case any person already ordained Minister in *Scotland*, or in any reformed Church, be designed to a Congregation in *England*, he is to bring from that Church to the Presbytery here, within which that Congregation is, a sufficient Testimoniall of his Ordination, of his life and conversation while he lived with them, and of the causes of his removall; and to undergoe such a triall of his finesse and sufficiency; And to have the same course held with him in other particulars, as is set downe in the rule immediatly going before touching examination & admission.

12 That Records be carefully kept in the severall Presbyteries of the Names of the persons Ordained with their Testimonials, the time and place of their Ordination, of the Presbyters who did impose hands upon them, and of the charge to which they are appointed,

13 That no Money or gift of what kinde soever shall be received from the person to be ordained, or from any on his behalfe for Ordination, or ought else belonging to it, by any of the Presbytery, or any appertaining to any of them, upon what pretence soever.

Thus far the ordinary rules and course of Ordination in the ordinary way. That which concernes the extraordinary way, requisite to be now practised, followeth:

1 In these present exigencies, while we cannot have any Presbyteries formed up to their whole power and worke, and that many Ministers are to be ordained for the Service of the Armies and Navie, and to many Congregations where there is no Minister at all, and where (by reason of the publike troubles) the people cannot either themselves enquire out and finde one, who may be a faithfull Minister for them, or have any with safety sent unto them

them for such a solemn tryall as was before mentioned in the ordinary rules, especially when there can be no Presbytery neere unto them, to whom they may addresse themselves, or which may come or send to them a fit man to be ordained in that Congregation, and for that people. And yet notwithstanding it is requisite that Ministers be ordained for them, by some who being set apart themselves for the worke of the Ministry; have power to joyne in the setting apart of others who are found fit and worthy: In these cases, untill by Gods blessing the aforesaid difficulties may be in some good measure removed, let some godly Ministers in or about the City of *London*, be designed by publike authority, who being associated may ordaine Ministers for the City, and the Vicinity, keeping as neere to the ordinary rules forementioned as possibly they may. And let this association be for no other intent or purpose, but onely for the worke of Ordination.

2 Let the like association be made by the same authority in great Towns and the neighbouring Parishes in the severall Counties, which are at the present quiet and undisturbed, to doe the like for the parts adjacent.

3 Let such as are chosen or appointed for the service of the Armies or Navie be ordained as abovesaid by the associated Ministers of *London*, or some others in the Countries.

4 Let them do the like when any man shall duly and lawfully be recommended to them for the Ministry of any Congregation, who cannot enjoy liberty to have a tryall of his parts and abilities, and desire the help of such Ministers so associated for the better furnishing of them with a Person, as by them shall be judged fit for the service of that Church and people.

Cornelius Burges Prolocutor, pro tempore,

Henry Roborough, Scrib.

Adoniram Byfield, Scrib.

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